Washington City
March 10th 1826.

Hon. Albert Gallatin,

Sir,

In attempting to comply with your request—
that of giving you a short account of the Cherokee
Nation, its present state of civilization and the man-
ner of its introduction, I take the liberty
to observe, that in the absence of chronological
official papers of my Nation, and at a distance
from it, where I least expected to under-
take an object of this kind, my observations will
be confined to facts that have transpired with-
in my own acknowledge, except so far as re-
lates to the first period when our civilization
as a people began How it has been effected.

The Cherokee Nation is bounded on the North
by east Tennessee & North Carolina, east by
Georgia, south by the Creek Nation & State
of Alabama, west by west Tennessee. Its
extreme length may be upwards of two hundred
miles & extreme breadth about ~~two~~ one hundred
and thirty: rough conjecture supposes it, to contain
about ten million acres of Land. This territory
is devided by law into eight Districts or Counties
the boundaries of which are regularly designated
and defined. A correct census of the Nation was
taken last year (1825) by order of the National coun-

cil to ascertain the amount of property & taxable individuals within the Nation. The result proved to be 13.583 native citizens, 147 white men married with Indians & 73 white women do. & african slaves 1.277 to which if we add 400 cherokees who took Reservations in North Carolina & not included in the census and who have since merged again amongst the Cherokee Nation will contain 15.480 inhabitants. There are a few instances of african mixture with cherokee blood, however it is seen is considered in the light of misfortune & disgrace; but that of the white may be as 1 to 4 occasioned by intermarriages which has been increasing in proportion to the march of civilization. This population is dispersed over the face of the Country on seperate farms; & villages or a community possessing one law, & local laws to govern the labor of the citizens, who acted in concert in cultivating their patches have disappeared long since, & to my knowledge there is but one of this character at Coosawattee, the inhabitants of which are gradually diminishing by emigration to the woods where they prefer to clear the forest & govern their own plantations. In this view of their ~~location~~ location it readily appears that they are farmers & herdsmen, which is their real character. Personal destinctions & graduation in property has been & will be a primary feature in the character of Nations, from the rudest tribes—

that roam the forest, to those who have ascended
to the pinacle of highest grandeur & intellect. So it
is with us, but it happily operates as a stimulus
for emulation, which gives force & accelerates the
wheels of our improvents.

Our Country is well adapted for the growth
of Indian Corn, wheat, rye & oats, Irish &
Sweet Potatoes, which are cultivated by our
people. Cotton is universally raised for domestic
consumption & a few have grown it for market
and have realized very good profits. I take pleas-
ure to state that there is not to my knowledge
a solitary Cherokee to be found who depends
upon the chase for subsistence. Every head of
a family has his own farm house. The hardest
portion of manual labor is performed by the
men & women occasionally lend a hand in
the field, more by choice & necessity than any-
thing else. Justice is due to the females of the
poorer class of whom I now speak. Daties assigned
them by Nature as mothers or wives, are well attended
to, & cheerfully do they prepare our meals, & for
the family, they sew, they spin & weave & are in
fact a valuable portion of our citizens. The offi-
cial chairs are mostly held by Half breeds &
full blooded Indians of talents. The valuable
portion of property is retained in this class. They
have a few framed & Brick houses, but their houses
are usually constructed of hewed ~~logs~~ logs with-

brick chimnies & shingled roofs. Their furniture is better than the exterior of their buildings would induce a stranger to believe. Servants attend at their meals, & the same rules & etiquette is observed at table as in the first families of the whites. Every family in the Nation ~~Nation~~ possesses hogs, cattle & horses, and a respectable number have begun to pay attention to the introduction of sheep, which are increasing very fast. The horse is in general use for purposes of Riding, drawing the plough or waggon. I am sorry that I have not with me, the estimate of the respective number of his property & their value, as well as the number of ploughs looms, waggons, saw & grist mills &c. in the Nation.

The females were the first who were induced to undertake domestic manufactures & they are still confined to them. These consist of white and striped homespun, coarse woollen Blankets and in many instances of very valuable and comfortable Twilled and figured coverlets. Woollen & cotton stockings are manufactured in every family for domestic use. A great portion of Cherokee clothing is furnished from our people and fancy goods, such as silks calicoes, cambrics, Handkerchiefs & Shawls &c. are introduced by Native merchants from the adjoining states. The principal portion of our trade consist in hogs & horned cattle. Skins —

Skins formerly were sold in respectable quantities, but that kind of trade is fast declining & becomes less reputable. Chiefs on the Tennessee river have already commenced to trade in cotton & grow it on large plantations, for which they have experienced flattering profit. Preparation is making by all those in good circumstances to cultivate the cotton for market, which will soon be a staple commodity of traffick for the Nation.

In giving you a view of the Nature of our Government you will be better able to ascertain the state of our improvement. Having been honored with a seat in its National Councils, I have better acquaintance with this branch of your enquiry than any other. All Indian Nations are devided into Tribes, destinguished by different names; these are again subdivided into Towns. In each of these Towns are some men, prominent for humanity, wisdom & valor. The assemblage of such men form their "Council fire". They are a standing body of Chieftans, who are first in the social circle, and foremost in the deadly fight- they possess within themselves, Legislative, Judicial & Executive powers. The first law of Nature & of Indians is against murder. Retaliation & revenge is the prerogative of the

of the tribe, to whom the victim belongs, and the friends & relatives of the aggressor are compelled by law to remain neuter. This was a principle of Government, in the worst of shapes, of our people. Our chiefs were numerous & their accountability was small. Lands could then be obtained at a price most convenient to the United States, as their commissioners with the assistance of the Agent could always procure a majority for a Session & when this was done the patriotic chiefs [illegible] yielded to secure their shares for the trifling equivalent. Savage ignorance saw its own folly, by the effects, which presented itself in a shape not to be misunderstood. The tide of white population, was advancing on all sides of the Indians, poor in goods but well supplied with the vices of their neighbors were retreating to a given point, while they would eventually be smoked in the folds of the encroaching Serpent. The Remedy was within themselves, and this could only be applied successfully in the amendment of their Government. Useless members were stricken off. A National seat of their Government was selected & a State house was built and the chiefs organised themselves into a standing body of Legislators who annually—

meet in October. They are composed of two departments, the National Committee and Representative Council the former consist of 13 members including their President and have a clerk to record their proceedings - they control and regulate their funds - they have power to inspect the Books of the Treasurer and acknowledge claims and Legislate Negative or concur with the proceedings in the other branch of the Legislature. The Representatives have Legislative powers to fill vacancies in the National Committee, concur with or reject their acts, and in conjunction with the committee elect their Headships or executive, or expel them for Misconduct. Laws of course are passed in the usual way of the adjoining states, which are at present written in the English Language & commence in the style to wit- "Be it Resolved by the National Committee and Council of the Cherokee Nation". The members of our Legislative Council are chosen, to represent the eight districts as satisfactorily as possible, as circumstances will allow. Our Judiciary having less obstacles to encounter in rendering it so, is more perfect than our Legislature. It is independent. Possesses power to bring any Chief of any grade before its tribunal try the cause, pass sentence & enforce it. Every District has a Court of Justice, over which the District Judge &c-

circuit Judge presides, the latter having jurisdiction over two Districts. A Jury is attached to each Court, but are liable to be substituted in case a reasonable objection is made, either by the plaintiff or defendent. The officers of the District such as Sheriffs, Marshals, & Constables are compelled to attend these Courts. All appeals are finally decided by the Supreme Court of the Nation which meets at every session of the National Council at the same place, and has power to exact costs which is not allowed to the District Courts.

As we are yet destitute of prisons, Justice is quickly inflicted. A thief as soon as convicted & sentence passed is tied to the next tree and on the naked skin is impressed his receipt for release. We have not as yet many written laws, it being the policy of our Government to regulate them only to the capacity & state of improvement of our citizens. Most of the adjudications are founded in the Spirit of National Law or Common Sense. A Sketch of a few of the Laws are as follow.

1st Law to regulate our citizens agreeable to the Intercourse laws of the United States for the purpose of securing Peace on the Frontier.

2d. Prohibiting the introduction of ardent Spirits by the whites. Penalty – confiscation.

3d Regulating intermarriages with the whites, which makes it necessary for a white man to obtain a license and be married by a Gospel minister or some-